



So You Want to Start a Krew?

*Everything You Need to Know if You're
Interested in Becoming a Certified Karma Krew Chief*

What is a Community Karma Krew?

It is already true that the yoga community all over the country and world serves to create a nurturing climate for self-awakening and enlightenment. It is our intention to help enrich and expand these efforts by creating a nationwide network of studios, teachers, and students that are committed to bringing the practice of yoga off the mat and into their local communities through a Community Karma Krew. A Community Karma Krew is an affiliate volunteer chapter of the national Karma Krew organization that is led by an appointed Krew Chief.

When a yoga teacher or student applies and is accepted to be a local Krew Chief, they help organize (with Karma Krew's help) a variety of *Karma Community Projects* and other *Simple Seva Initiatives* for their local yoga community on a regular basis. Past *Karma Community Projects* and *Simple Seva Initiatives* have included activities such as planting oak trees at nature preserves; organizing canned food drives through local studios, volunteering at soup kitchens; doing yoga-thon fundraisers for Karma Krew; painting homes for the developmentally challenged; decorating children shelters for the holidays; painting high schools; and supporting the troops abroad with care packages. Each simple offering aims to create positive change in the world and in ourselves through the combination of turning inward and reaching outward.

What's the purpose for creating Community Karma Krews?

In our experience as yoga teachers, we have found it is all too common for teachers and other karma yogis to get burnt out quickly in our seva offerings and feel depleted. Instead of bolstering our own practices and connecting us with others, this feeling of depletion can often lead to overwhelm and isolation. We created the Community Karma Krew Initiative to support the yoga community from within and empower students and teachers alike in creating a sustainable and fulfilling karma practice – one that increases the abundance of positive energy both externally *and* internally. The Community Karma Krew network provides the logistical, emotional, and social support that individuals need and crave as they seek to create a karma practice that is effective, sustainable, and self-nurturing at the same time.

The Community Karma Krew Initiative has also proved to be a powerful recipe for breaking down the barriers between different studios in the community – establishing new opportunities for yogis from all styles and lineages to come together with the intention of serving the greater good. We have found in our experience that together we can make so much more positive change happen than we can do alone. Many people of all different traditions are already doing wonderful acts of karma. With Community Karma Krews, we create opportunities to share these ideas; support each other; and increase connections.

What are the guiding principles of the Community Krew Program?

- **Make opportunities for karma or seva accessible and simple:** There are opportunities for service everywhere, and sometimes that makes people overwhelmed because they don't know where to start. With Karma Krew's help, Community Krews are able to find simple, powerful, and effective ways to serve without overcomplicating things. As one Krew Chief expressed, "Karma Krew provides a simple yet extremely elegant way for individuals to plug into service in a way that barely detracts from the focus of an otherwise busy life."
- **Commitment to Excellence:** We are proud of the Karma Krew name and all that it stands for. We are committed to providing our Community Krews with all the support they need to create high quality seva

offerings, and we choose Krew Chiefs that can support the Karma Krew vision and act with integrity towards that end.

- **Being firm with our intention, yet flexible with form:** Karma or service comes in many forms. It is not our intention with the Community Krew Initiative to create a cookie-cutter model of what “karma” looks like. Instead, we seek to provide a solid and sustainable infrastructure for yoga communities across the country to tap into their creativity so they can create the karma and seva offerings that most genuinely speak to them and their community. Our intention stays firm in our founding principles, but how those values get expressed changes from one Krew to the next.
- **It’s all yoga:** We are committed to expanding the everyday definition of what it means to “practice yoga” in the United States. Whether we’re performing asana, painting a house, writing a letter to a soldier, or doing a random act of kindness, we believe it’s all yoga!
- **Create connections and learn from each other:** The concept of karma yoga is far from new, and so many of you out there are already doing great work. It is our hope that through a network like the Community Krews, we create vital opportunities for yogis around the country to share their best practices and learn from each other. Together, our collective wisdom, talents, ideas, and skills are so much more powerful than they are alone. Let’s learn from each other in hopes of mobilizing our energy to support the greater good!
- **Provide Professional Development and Nurturing Support for the Krew Chiefs:** Krew Chiefs are leaders and caregivers in their community, and this type of individual all too often overlooks self-care or places it second to taking care of others. While such a giving heart is an honorable thing, it is far from sustainable. We seek to support you in changing that pattern to a healthier and more empowering model that includes ample opportunity for self care, nurturing, and personal/ professional growth. Through regular enrichment calls; blogging; leadership trainings, Krew Chief Retreats; and a variety of other built-in support systems, we prioritize the health and well-being of the Krew Chiefs and recognize how essential it is to provide them with on-going support.

I think I want to be a Krew Chief. So what exactly do I have to do to run a Community Krew?

It’s simple!

- **At least 4 times a year, organize a Karma Community Project, preferably one project per season.** A *Karma Community Project* is a community outreach project that is offered free to local studios, students, teachers, and the general public. In addition to the service component itself, the *Community Project* event also includes an opportunity for group share (satsang) and often includes a brief or modified asana component as well. The asana component is led each time by a different teacher from the local community. The event usually lasts about 3 or 3 and ½ hours. Examples of a *Karma Community Project* might be planting trees in a local park; serving meals at a soup kitchen; or decorating a children’s shelter for the holidays. The yoga class and group share often take place right on the project site. Though only four *Karma Community Projects* are required for each Krew, many choose to do additional ones because they are such an effective way of mobilizing people, inspiring change, and having fun!
- **In the months where you do not organize a Karma Community Project, create an opportunity for a Simple Seva Initiative through the local studios.** *Simple Seva Initiatives* take a maximum of about 5 minutes and can occur on people’s own time schedules. Some examples of a *Simple Seva Initiative* might be organizing a canned food drive through the local studios, or it may be a table in the local yoga studios where people can stop by and write a quick note to a wounded soldier overseas. *Simple Seva Initiatives* keep the momentum going during those months where the *Community Projects* are not happening. They require less preparation and planning time on part of the Krew Chief and account for those months where individuals’ calendars might be overbooked with events and a *Community Project* wouldn’t be as effective.

Also, we ask that our Krew Chiefs:

- **Participate in the Krew Chief Kula:** We provide a variety of ways for Krew Chiefs to stay connected to the larger Kula (community) including enrichment calls via teleconference; a blogging site specifically for Krew Chiefs; leadership trainings and retreats; and much more. Stay plugged in, and feel the love!
- **Promote Karma Krew through recruitment of members.** Karma Krew is a membership based non-profit, and we rely on annual memberships to sustain the big vision of this expansive network. People who attend Community Krew activities often want to know how they can support the cause, and annual memberships start for as little as \$30. Though it’s not a requirement for participants to pay or become a member, many choose to do so, and our Krew Chiefs are essential in communicating this message to local participants.

What exactly does Karma Krew provide in terms of support for running a Community Krew?

You are busy. We know this. ☺ So, we've done everything we can to streamline the process of creating and running a Krew. You will get all the support, instruction, inspiration, and guidance necessary to fulfill your role successfully as a Krew Chief. Here's what we provide:

- **A comprehensive Organizer Tool Kit** that includes information on all of the logistics of a successful Krew. This easy-to-use manual includes the Karma Krew Chief Code of Conduct; information on growing the grassroots network successfully; the ins and outs of organizing effective and inspiring *Karma Community Projects* and *Simple Seva Initiatives*; logos, templates, and text copy for all of your publicity and communication needs; an extensive resource section with details on how to connect with non-profits and other organizations in your area, and so much more.
- **Karma Krew literature:** brochures, membership forms, your own business cards, and other publicity materials as needed.
- **Monthly theme ideas:** Not only do we pick themes of service each month for all Krews to work towards, but if you're still struggling for specific ideas for an offering, each month we provide multiple options for both *Community Projects* and *Simple Seva Initiatives* if you need them. You're not required to use these ideas, but it helps in those months where you might be stuck.
- **Regular Enrichment Calls via Teleconference:** These bi-monthly enrichment calls are an opportunity to talk with both of us and other Krew Chiefs around the country to hear about what's going on in other Krews. We also use these calls to answer questions; brainstorm new ideas; provide professional development training; and have notable guest speakers share their insights about karma yoga, community building, and other relevant topics.
- **Your own local Krew Web Page at www.karmakrew.org:** You will be provided with a web page at our website. This is where you'll be able to post your events, pictures, and any other information you want to share with your local Krew. This is also where people will sign up for your *Community Projects*. You will be provided with a restricted access password so that you can change the web page anytime you need to. No HTML or web design experience needed, On the back end, you can make your edits in a program that looks like a Microsoft Word document. You are also provided with the support you need from our volunteer staff so you can learn how to use this effectively.
- **Chief Blog Site:** We're serious about building a community of support for you. This will be another way you can share and swap stories and ideas with other Krew Chiefs around the country.
- **Opportunities for professional development trainings and retreats exclusively for Krew Chiefs:** This is an opportunity for us to get together and immerse ourselves more fully in the lessons of karma and learn about how we can continue to build a sustainable network of karma yogis together. It's also an opportunity for the Chiefs to do some team building, leadership training, group community projects, and just general relaxing! Our first Retreat and Leadership Training is scheduled for February 2009 in Costa Rica.
- **Recognition as a Certified Karma Krew Chief:** Krew Chiefs are certified and receive our stamp of approval. As the good will of the Karma Krew name grows, your local Krew will receive the benefit of that national recognition. Studios and teachers often find increased business comes in after they start a Krew. Several more people who aren't already taking yoga classes end up trickling into the studio or class after exposure to yoga through a Karma Krew project.

Can I be a Co-Chief with someone?

If you want, you can. However, you may just opt for a committee. We *require* each Krew to have a committee of at least 3 people in place (including the Chief) before they can become an official Krew. We also require that you have the backing of at least one yoga studio in your area to help promote local Krew activities. These measures ensure that you will have the local support you need to organize the activities so it doesn't all fall on your plate, and the local studio will help you to promote to a larger population.

Do I have to be a yoga teacher to be a Chief?

No, students can be a Krew Chief as well, but we recommend you have at least one teacher on your committee. You'll also need the backing of at least one local studio for the above mentioned reasons.

Do I have to own or manage a studio to be a Chief?

No. If you own or manage a studio, great! It will only help to further serve the success of your program, but it is not a requirement.

Can there be more than one Krew in the same metropolitan area?

Yes. We are big on quality rather than quantity when it comes to running the Community Krew program. However, some metropolitan areas like NYC, LA, or Boston, for example, may be best served by several local Krews. This will be determined on a case by case basis, and when possible we encourage Krews in nearby areas to work together or join forces.

Are there fees associated with being a Krew chief? Why?

Yes. There are nominal fees associated with starting a Krew. We keep costs as low as possible, but the fee helps us to cover the expenses of running a successful national Community Krew program. It covers the expenses of maintaining a website, printing of literature materials, liability insurance to cover all Krews, and much more. The fee is split as such:

- **Licensing Fee: \$70 per Krew, per year.** Upon acceptance as a Karma Krew Chief Volunteer, you will receive a comprehensive Karma Krew Chief Organizer Tool Kit complete with logos, literature, waiver forms, and all the other materials you will need to get your program running as simply as possible. With this, you will also be granted by Karma Krew, Inc. a one-year limited, non-exclusive license use of the Karma Krew, Inc. logo and the title "Karma Krew Chief" which indicates to the public that you meet the Karma Krew Chief minimum standards. To use this license and remain affiliated with Karma Krew, Inc. there is an annual licensing fee of \$70 per Krew, per year.

- **Membership Fee: \$30 and up per Krew Chief, per year.** We ask that Krew Chiefs become members of Karma Krew to support the on-going grassroots efforts to bring yoga to underserved populations and support the grassroots efforts. Krew Chiefs can be members at any level they choose, and memberships start as low as \$30 annually.

What are the benefits of running a Community Krew?

- **Good Karma ☺:** Transform your yoga practice; make new friends; laugh and learn; experience heart-opening with friends and even with complete strangers; challenge yourself; go places you've never dared to go both internally and externally; and know that you'll be supported in the process!
- **New exposure and business for your studio in the local community:** Many teachers and studios find that running local *Karma Community Projects* has increased their clientele and exposure throughout the local community. Many regular students bring their friends and family to events, and this introduces a whole new stream of people into the mix, growing the prosperity and abundance for you and your local community.
- **Recognition as a Certified Krew Chief:** Karma Krew is a national 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and as it grows, its name and good will serves to benefit every local Krew and Chief around the country. Your studio, teaching, and yoga practice will become associated with the high standard of excellence and integrity that Karma Krew strives to uphold, making you and/or your studio a leader within your community.
- **The social, emotional, and logistical support of being part of a growing and thriving national grassroots network.** What might feel daunting or too abstract to manage or organize on our own becomes remarkably simple and elegant when we pool our resources, our expertise, and creativity all together. For example, when trying to work with local organizations in your area, it's often easier to approach them as a representative of an established organization rather than as an individual. We found this to be particularly true when asking for in-kind donation support for projects. Also, on those days where you feel uninspired or low on energy, you have a network of yogis and Chiefs right behind you ready to support you with ideas, inspiration, and encouragement. Together, we can accomplish so much more than we can alone.
- **Opportunities for professional development and leadership training:** We recognize that the Krew Chiefs are the heartbeat of this organization, and we are committed to serving and supporting them in every way possible. Through organizer kits, enrichment calls, blogs, workshops, trainings, retreats, and more, we plan on continually broadening the ways in which we can support you and your karma efforts. We want you to succeed. Our world needs more leaders like you, and we want to sustain your efforts. As we grow, our capacity to serve you becomes even stronger, and we will continue to prioritize your success as a Chief.

I like this idea, but I feel too busy. Should I apply?

As fulfilling, exciting, and enriching as the experience can be, the role of Krew Chief is not for everyone. This is one of the reasons we have an application process: to give you a chance to align with your intention and find out if this is the right fit for you. We created the Community Karma Krew Initiative in part to take out the guesswork of

activating one's intention to serve. We do everything we can to make it as easy and as "grace-filled" for you as possible. As one Krew chief says, "Karma Krew provides a simple yet extremely elegant way for individuals to plug in to service in a way that barely detracts from the focus of an otherwise busy life." Nonetheless, it does require a certain level of commitment on your part, and only you can determine whether this is a good fit for you. Be clear in your intention, and the beauty and abundance of this unique role will unfold right before your eyes!

I'm interested. What do I need to do to become a Krew Chief?

- **Determine who will be on your local Krew committee:** You are required to have at least 3 active committee members (including yourself) determined before you apply. This committee will be responsible for organizing the efforts of your local Krew and delegating out tasks to other volunteers as needed. If you are not a teacher, we recommend you make at least one of your other committee members a teacher. Choose a diverse committee with people who have different strengths, talents, and backgrounds.
- **Secure the support of at least one local yoga studio:** You are required to have the support of at least one local yoga studio that agrees to help advertise your local Karma Krew events to their clientele. This studio must be determined before you apply. If you own or manage a studio, your studio can fulfill this requirement.
- **Fill out and submit the application for Krew Chief:** Each person interested in becoming a Krew Chief must fill out the application and submit it via email or mail to Karma Krew for review. If you are considering being a Co-Chief with someone, each of you must fill out a separate application.
- **Participate in a Brief Interview and Orientation Phone Call with one of the Founders:** After we review your application, we will call you for a brief phone interview and orientation phone call where we can answer your questions and assess if the role of Krew Chief seems like a good fit for you.
- **Once accepted, you'll receive everything you need to get started:** If it feels like a good match and all application requirements have been completed, we will then provide you with an orientation packet that includes the Karma Krew Chief Code of Conduct and the licensing agreement for you to sign and submit with the nominal fee. Then, we provide you with everything you need to launch your program. Get ready, set, serve!

We anticipate that there may be additional questions you have after reading this introductory text. If there are questions you need to have answered before you apply, please feel free to contact us, and we will be happy to discuss with you in more detail. Please remember that we also schedule a personal phone call with you after we receive your application to brief you more specifically on all aspects of the program. Thank you in advance for your careful reading of this document. We are honored to have you consider joining the network of Community Karma Krews.

With gratitude,

Amy Lombardo and Scott Feinberg
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TESTIMONIALS: WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT KARMA KREW

"My experience with Karma Krew thus far has been extraordinary. I really can't recommend getting involved with Karma Krew highly enough. I've had the incredible opportunity of meeting people and sharing experiences that I never would otherwise meet or have. I've been challenged to face my judgments and fears, my sense of isolation and unworthiness; I've stepped across racial, class, ethnic and age divides and have found wonder and joy in the very acts and interactions that at first terrified me. I've discovered that people in local communities are just looking and waiting for opportunities to bridge these divides too; I've discovered that most people are just looking for a way to plug into service, they just don't know how. Karma Krew provides a simple yet extremely elegant way for individuals to plug in to service in a way that barely detracts from the focus of an otherwise busy life." –Deb Neubauer, Certified Anusara teacher and Local Karma Krew Chief in North Hampton, MA

“I am so filled with gratitude for my experience with Karma Krew! This month we collaborated with the Sanibel Sea School and Footsteps to the Future, a program for at risk adolescent girls. On a beautiful Saturday, we helped transport 15 teenage girls to Health & Harmony Yoga Studio where we had a short yoga class and introduction to the day. Then Bruce Neill, from the Sea School, picked us up and took us to the beach for an afternoon of fun and learning. It was a great opportunity to serve and to learn about the needs in our community, both with the girls and the environment. This really does exemplify the spirit of Karma Krew! Who knows where the seeds of love and knowledge offered that day will float?” –Debbie Padnuk, Lee County Florida, Karma Krew Chief

“As the yoga community matures, it is organizations like Karma Krew that can inspire more and more practitioners to expand their yoga practice beyond the mat and into all the simple choices of daily living. Then we will be able to say yoga has truly infiltrated the West in a transformative and sincere way.” – Sarah Powers

“Karma Krew is a pioneer in providing access for all walks of life to participate in the essentially human activities of supporting and uplifting each other through service (seva) to another. The positive difference we make in the lives of others is taken off the mat through Karma Krew's many initiatives. Whether its by building self esteem in at-risk groups through the practices of yoga, or passing along a small gesture of kindness to a stranger, the ideas of Karma Krew are the unmistakable tenets of yoga philosophy--goodness is a renewable and self-perpetuating resource--the more we give the more we all receive. As Karma Krew participants work to improve the world and the lives of others, they gain a deeper understanding of themselves. By participating in Karma Krew projects, you will deepen your experience and understanding of life as you gain access to the promise of yoga - experience of the Self through another!” –Jordan Bloom, Certified Anusara teacher and Karma Krew Advisory Board Member

“Karma Krew is right on the cutting edge of the yoga community. With their Community Krew Program, they are inviting the yoga community to pioneer a more mature and relevant approach to yoga which combines personal practice with service to the world. We all know that the health of the human psyche and the health of the world are inextricably related, and we cannot truly heal one without healing the other. Karma Krew offers a clear pathway to heal both ourselves and our world. Never have we needed them more!” – Gail Straub, author of [The Rhythm of Compassion](#) and Co-Founder of the Empowerment Institute, and Karma Krew Advisory Board Member